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# Breathe easy

How to prepare if your business is in an Air Quality Scheme Hotspot

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Is your business situated in any of the hotspots where air quality schemes are proposed? If so, you may face a significant impact on access to your business for guests, staff and deliveries. Our guide explains the potential risks and impacts and how you can prepare to de-risk the impacts.

## **What is an Air Quality Scheme?**

Air quality is top of the political agenda in London. Research shows that pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide and particulates are linked to a large number of deaths per year. The UK government (at both the central and local level) are under legal and political pressure to meet EU Air Quality Directive targets.

In London, the Mayor's Air Quality Fund has been set up to provide funding to the London Boroughs to establish themselves as Low Emission Neighbourhoods (LENs). The Healthy Streets Approach framework was used to inform the Mayor's Transport Strategy and also influences local authority and Transport for London (TfL) decision making. It aims to improve air quality, reduce congestion and make communities greener and more attractive places to live and work. Public consultations are also currently ongoing across the London Boroughs for the Local Implementation Plan for Transport. This will set the policy framework for transport initiatives and investments that address the outcomes in the Mayor's Transport Strategy at a Borough level and identify specific schemes that will be brought forward in the next few years.





# Jargon Buster

## **ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zone)**

The ULEZ aims to improve air quality in London. Due to come into effect from 8 April 2019, it will require vehicle owners to meet tighter exhaust emission standards, and replaces the T-Charging Zone. It will apply 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Drivers of vehicles which do not meet the standards will be required to pay a daily charge (currently £12.50 a day). By 25 October 2021 the zone will expand up to the North and South Circular roads.

## **ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicles)**

ULEVs emit less than 75g of carbon dioxide per kilometre travelled and includes all fully electric vehicles and some hybrids. These are the only vehicles which can enter the ULEZ without charge.

## **LEN (Low Emission Neighbourhoods)**

LENs are schemes aimed at improving air quality in certain London boroughs. They are delivered by the borough with support from TfL, the GLA and the local community. Currently, the following boroughs will be designated LENs by April 2019: [Barbican](#), [City Fringe](#) (which is made up of Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets), [Greenwich Town Centre](#), [Marylebone](#) and Ilford Garden Junction however there will be more in the pipeline once the GLA has allocated next year's Air Quality Fund.

## **ULEV Streets**

Ultra Low Emission Streets is an example of a scheme which may be implemented in a LEN to tackle air quality and restrict access for vehicles which do not meet ULEV standards. There are currently ULEV streets in the City Fringe and a similar project has been proposed to limit access to the southern end of Moor Lane in the City. This is due to come into effect from April 2019.

## **Healthy Streets Approach**

Healthy Streets Approach is a framework adopted by the Mayor of London and TfL to encourage less reliance on cars and more use of sustainable transport. The policy supports the current proposed changes to the layout, speed limit and access for motorised vehicles in the Tooley Street area. The consultation is live and ends on Tuesday 8 January 2019.

### Where are these Hotspots?

The areas indicated on the map have already successfully bid to receive funding to support their efforts to tackle air quality. Those indicated in **red** are 'LENs' and **orange** shows 'Healthy Streets.'

Bidding is currently open for other London Boroughs to apply for the Mayor's Air Quality Fund, and if their bid is successful, they will receive up to £500,000 to implement low emissions measures in their Borough.

### How will this impact your business?

The current and proposed schemes include some of the following measures: making streets no entry (apart from cyclists and buses); putting restrictions on non-ULEV vehicles accessing streets during particular times of the day; preventing access to main roads from particular side streets; and removing waiting/loading bays. These measures can have a significant commercial impact on businesses.

We have recently advised a client with a well-known hotel global brand falling within the City Fringe LEN, where a ULEV street scheme was implemented by local traffic order. This restricted the use of the only access road by vehicles (including taxis, private hire vehicles and deliveries) during key hours of the day, making it difficult for hotel guests to access the hotel and restaurant and causing a significant impact on the operation of the business.

### What can you do?

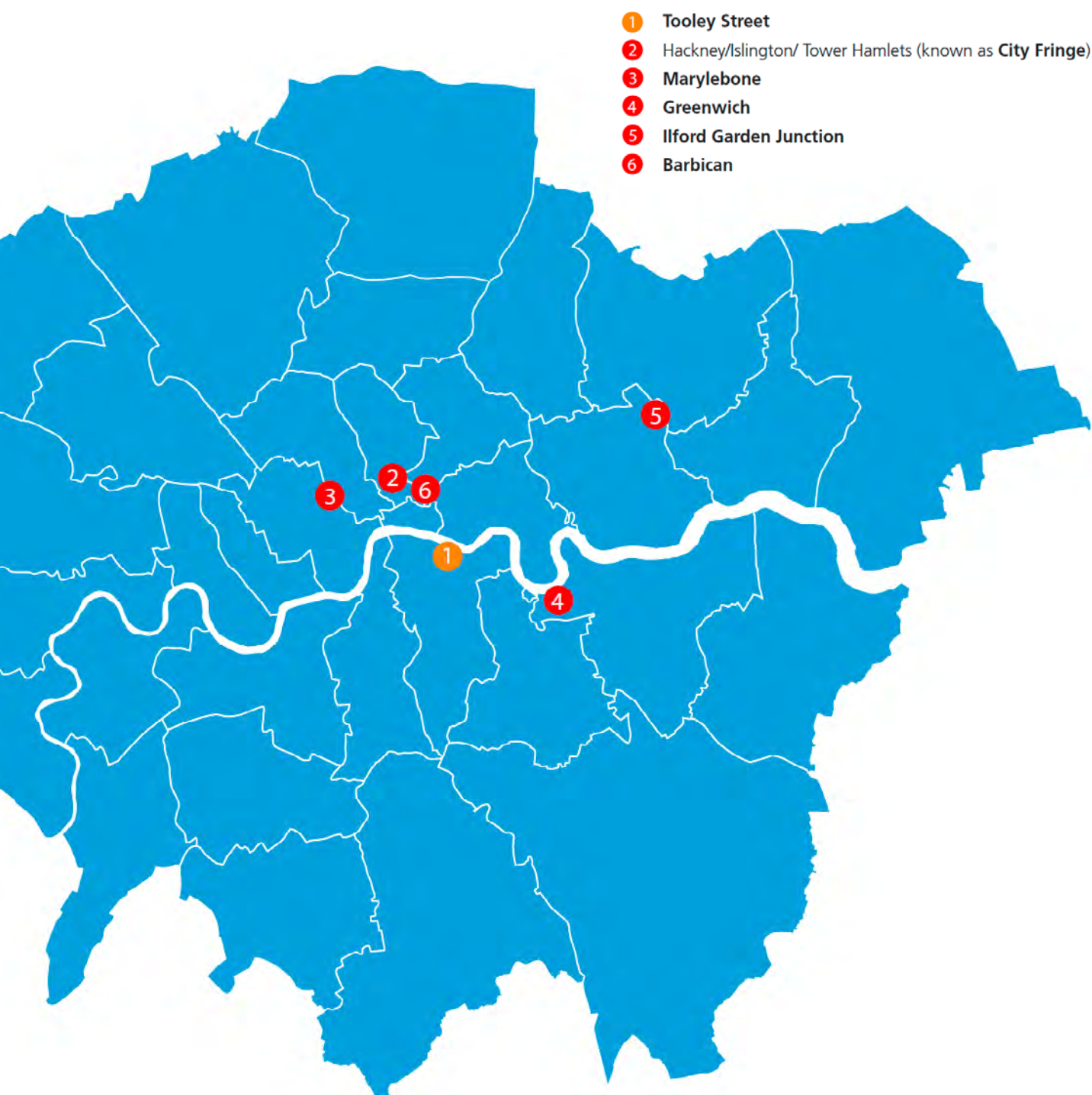
It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to consult local residents and businesses on certain proposals, although consultation materials may be sent directly to occupational tenants rather than landowners. Look out for notices: LEN websites, The Gazette, local newspapers and public planning notices will inform you if a scheme is proposed in your local area. Local stakeholders may also be informed of potential schemes via leaflet drops, pop-up information sessions and local community meetings.

It is essential to engage in the consultation process as early as possible. That is your opportunity to raise any concerns that you have with the proposed scheme and collaborate with the local authority to find workable solutions to mitigate any negative impacts on your business. If you miss this window of opportunity, the only potential route to amending an approved scheme is via legal challenge. By responding you may mitigate the effects of the traffic order that brings the scheme into effect.

There are a number of proposals under consultation affecting **Marylebone High Street** and **Paddington Street**. The consultations are currently live and open until 6 January 2019.

The **Tooley Street Healthy Streets consultation** is currently live and open until 8 January 2019.











# Contact us

We will update you as and when new information is released however if you wish to speak to someone in the meantime please contact a member of our specialist team.



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